A QUIRE OF RHYMES

WILLIAM EVANS, B.A.
(WIL IFAN)
CARDIFF

ONE SHILLING NETT

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WILLIAM EVANS, B.A.
(Wil Ifan),

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A QUIRE OF RHYMES.

DOROTHEA.

(D.J.)

"WHO giveth this woman ?"
And someone in the temple gloom
Faltering made reply.
Vain man ! as if that perfect bloom
Soft-petalled with red modesty,
Before the shrine,
Were ever thine
To give ! Is she not Dorothy—
"The gift of God ?"

God's pity saw a world once fair
Grow old and cold with carking care ;
Choosing the youngest of the throng
Whose fingers weave the deathless song,
He sent her dawning to a land of night
By ways untrod,
And all men called her Dorothy—
"The gift of God."

He brimmed her soul with merriment
As gay and warm and innocent
As the laughter of the South ;
And when her gladness soon and late
Comes skipping through the pearly gate
Of her sweet mouth,
Despair is turned to melody
And men thank heaven on bended knee
For Dorothy—
" The gift of God."

GRATITUDE.

A GIPSY opened her rough brown hand,
Curtseying low, of an April day ;
Some seeds was all I had in the world ;
I gave them, smiling, and went my way.

Of an autumn evening a woman I met,
In a purple gown with yellow braid ;
Laughing she filled my arms with fruit—
" Don't you remember your gipsy maid ?"

THE CARS.

WHAT is that rumbling that swells and dies
And swells again ere the echoes drown ?
That is the sea, the billowy sea
That moans with the dawn into London Town.

The sea ? and does it sweep alway
Through London Town, with its moaning dread ?
It flows unceasing, wave on wave,
And it only ebbs when the day lies dead.

And is it a wild and treacherous main ?
Or is there a heart beneath its roar ?
Not a tide ebbs out but a hundred wrecks
Are left unpitied upon the shore.

BEADS.

(Seen in a case in the Ashmolean Museum, Celtic Section.)

Just six blue beads ;
But I see them, I see them again
On the virgin white of a lovely throat,
Like the blue of a wintry sky afloat
On a billowy world of snow.

Just six blue beads ;
But I know how they caught the hue
Of her proud wild eyes,
Of her soft mild eyes,
Warmed by the morning glow of love
And lit by a meek surprise.

Just six blue beads ;
Not a heavy burthen he bore ;
But see what a trembling takes his hand,
He the stoutest warrior in all the land,
With a hand that ne'er shook before.

Just six blue beads ;
But her heart almost throbbed her life away ;
And the throb got into the tell-tale beads,
(For her throat bore now the azure load),
While her cheek was red as the western road,
Where the petals fall from the roses of day.

A PRAYER FOR STRAIGHT LINES.

LINES, lines, Oh, God, lines straight and hard !
Like the lines of that grim granite
On the grave there, straight and stark and cold ;
Or like yon clean-cut pinetree straight and tall
But for the gentle curve of the green ;
Gentle ! was ever curve gentle ?
I loved the rounded softness of her chin ;
I dreamt on mounded sweetnesses ;
I sang the smooth of gleaming billows ;
My drowning soul !
O, gently curving road, soft-banked with primrose,
Caressing velvet slopes,
Curving and winding,
Serpenting
To the chasmed valleys of despair.

THE MESSENGER.

(*Written May*, 1915.)

THEY fling their gladness high in air,
The frenzied woodland throng,
As they seek to mesh the rays of dawn
In their tangled web of song.

They trill the grove to a shivering joy,
Holding the heart in trance—
They cannot have heard of the bitterness
In the bloody trenches of France.

And who will deny them their hour of bliss?
Let them sing, while a wise world grieves;
Too soon will the cuckoo cross the wave
With the bruised news to the leaves.

RAIN.

RAIN, rain, sheets of rain !
A panting noon
In June ;
A blinding flash
And a deafening crash ;
A few hot drops each circling wide
On the stones outside ;
And more again ;
Then rain, rain, flapping sheets of rain !
How the dusty hedge will rejoice and sing !
How the may will spring !
(Go back an hour,
Could you tell the leaf from the flower ?)
Indeed I must out to see it all,
To feel it all,
To steal it all ;
I have kept my room when 'tis but a shower,
But when the real rain just pours,
Then 'tis out of doors,
And up the hill,
Where the road is now a glistening stream,
The wayside rill
One gurgling joy ;
Is it all a dream
Or a shining page from a story book ?

Look !
The broom is gold without alloy ;
The may is living green and white !
And now the sun bursts out
In jewelled light
Putting the clouds to rout,
I turn me back at last :—
Have I not broken my spirit's fast ?
My inmost heart is whole.
Banging the trellised gate with a will,
To catch another mimic shower
From the dripping bower,
I stand on the doorstep singing still,
Drenched to the soul.

THE AWAKENING.

Charmed by thy song, Myvanwy,
All flowers, skylarks and sun,
Through the mist I beheld a dawn on the hills
Blending two hearts in one.

Thou singest again of the sunshine—
And why should'st thou know of the rain,
Of the nestling dreams that have taken them wings,
Rending one heart in twain ?

THE DOVE OF GOD.

WOULD I might find again the mossy path
That drew my footsteps to those leafy deeps!
The day with all his hosts was on the hills
Streaming aloft the rippling joy of larks
Like pennons in the wind; while night and I
Shrank ever deeper by all tangled paths
Into the silence of the forest soft—
Clung in our fevered dread unto its heart.
Long, long we tarriêd till we could forth
Again; and tarrying long I lay me down
Weary with fear at some tall giant's feet;
A pine it was and it had spread for me
A soft brown bed and sweet, while kindly night
Astoop beneath the branch, with shaking hand
Threw o'er me her own tattered cloak.
My pain
And dread stared up into the canopy
Where many a sunlit ribbon quivered, torn
And tangled mid the branches of the pine.
When lo, from somewhere in the day above
There came a sound with healing in its wing,
Falling so gently through the twilit trees
Into the anguished midnight of a soul;
So near it fell I heard its throbbing heart
Telling of pity and all tenderness;
By it all sweetest melody was harsh,
Silence itself was discord.

Looking up,
I saw anew the pinetree's awesome height
Carrying the clouds unto the blue of heaven.
And then I trembled more, for then I knew,
Kneeling, *that I had heard the Dove of God.*

Though I have lost the mossy path, methinks
I sometimes catch the echoes of the song
In raining tears, in Nesta's lullabies,
And in the full warm pity of the viol ;
And once I found an evening sad with peace
And knew it was a feather from the nest,
A soft blue feather from the holy wing ;
And while I haunt the shore of leafy deeps,
Seeking the pine-tree where the music nests,
That feather still lies warm upon my heart.

BACK FROM HIS LAST LEAVE.

From the red-brick station, to home again,
With many smiles they trudged along ;
The evening bore a load of joy
Tied up with silver song.

The mother told her merriest tale,
The father's laughter ringing clear ;
And night came stealing o'er the hills
To hide each silent tear.

MIST.

FROM the haven into the fog
She sailed right gallantly ;
There is ever a mist on Cardigan Bay
When " The Dora " puts out to sea.

For days did I climb the cliff,
But the haze hung heavy and grey ;
There is ever a mist on the dim sky-line
When " The Dora " is long away.

She comes ! Though so blurred and faint,
My longing knew it was she ;
There is ever a mist on the harbour bar
When " The Dora " comes back to me.

A POET.

A ROTTING spar lay on the shore,
The white ghost of a long dead mast
That once held the sails of a ship before
  Many a driving blast—
  To fail at the last!
A screaming hurricane tearing the sail
  Mocking the sighs of the gallant crew,
  Drowning the cries of the gallant crew,
And only one rotting spar
  To tell all the anguished tale
  Of the wrecking gale
That blew:
And seated on the rotting spar
  Was a fair-haired youth, eyes closed as in sleep,
Weaving a song of acres untrod,
Of the measureless music of the deep,
  And the fathomless love of God!

POPLARS.

("*And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*")

WEARY I sought my attic,
Flung open the window wide,
And douting the candle-gleam I lit
A big white moon outside ;
Its beams were caught and scattered
By the leaves of the poplar trees,
A flowing tide that rose and fell
Quivering with every breeze.

" Sh !" said the leafy ocean
Afoam with shattered beams,
And soon the music of many waves
Washed the shore of my dreams :
And I woke refreshed, with the dawning,
And my heart within me was whole—
For in rivers of healing, green and cold,
I had plunged a fevered soul.

A PRAYER.

Clothed in war's grim panoply,
Lowly we bend on suppliant knee,
And in the din that rends the air,
Father, oh hear our broken prayer.

On frightened wing Thy snow-white dove
Hath left bereaved her wonted grove ;
The blades of hate are gleaming bare ;
Father, oh hear our broken prayer.

Thy sunshine gav'st Thou, every morn,
Gladdening the fields with laughing corn ;
Another harvest reaped we there !
Father, oh hear our broken prayer.

For all Thy wounded sons who fall
(And One is wounded with them all) ;
For all who wait with anguished care,
Father, oh hear our broken prayer.

The sudden darkness spareth not
The pilèd mansion or the cot ;
Oh Dayspring ! heal our vast despair ;
Father, oh hear our broken prayer.

3 A.M.

SHOULD you wake in the dim night watches
To hear the clock strike three,
Arrow a prayer to heaven
For all in adversity,
One little prayer then turn again
And sleep right peacefully.

'Tis the hour when the pulse beats faintest,
When the weak for the morning yearn,
When the watchers at the bedside
Dumbly expect the turn ;
One prayer for him before you sleep—
Feel how his temples burn.

" Three !" She also heard it
With a start out there in the night ;
She was gazing into the river
Too worn to take up the fight ;
One fervent prayer, she yet may turn
Away and wait for the light.

And down by yon blinking harbour
The end cannot be far ;
In pain an old mariner lingers
Under his " evening star ";
One breath of a prayer may fill his sail
And take him over the bar.

O, the moaning, moaning, moaning,
In a monotone weird and sad ;
O, the moaning rising and falling
Then the sudden shout and mad ;
Pray that both mother and child may live
Then sleep, if you can, my lad.

GWENHWYVAR.

On the morning that tore us asunder,
Each bird had forgotten his lay ;
I heard but the moan of a troubled sea ;
Gwenhwyvar ! the light of my day !

A tear was thine only farewell ;
One tear, soon brushed away ;
But I heard the moan of a deep deep sea
Gwenhwyvar ! the light of my day !

TWO WRECKS.

(" *The Titanic* " *and* " *The Lusitania.*")

When fell the Titan with his living load,
Struck by the viking spear, a nation's heart
Was rent with icy horror. Strong men wept,
And long did sorrow haunt the Western shore
Wringing her feeble hands and moaning low
The bitter helplessness of man against
A sea's dominion, vast, relentless, cold.

Again the horror comes ; a lurking death
Low crouching by his evil lair awaits
His prey and springs, straight driven by the heat
Of his own madden'd lust ; strong men have heard
But strong men cannot weep : the fiery rage
That silent sprang upon a helpless prey
Has burnt a road into a nation's soul.
Sorrow still treads the shore ; but tearless now
She gazes wildly on the Eastern main,
Eager, impatient, girt with righteousness
And in her strong right hand a flaming sword.

CALVARY.

THE swaying multitude, wave on mad wave,
Surged to the hill, and on its frenzy bore
The wildered victim clinging to his beam,
The spar of death. He had been strong, but now
He saw the long nails and his heart was turned
Within him.

Lo, the burdened cross! The blood
Streams down the upright log, the knotted wood
Turning the river,—rains from either hand
Outstretched: poor twitching fingers! O, that Death
Would come or leaden sleep! But no; that mob
Had learnt too well its dev'lish trade. Long hours
He anguished there, his eyes thick-veiled with pain;
And gleaning his last breath he cursed them all.

None giving heed; for every eye was drawn
Towards the cross hard by; he also looked
And wondered, with a burning brain, what crime
That pale-faced boy had wrought who looked too dull
For theft, for murder red too weak; and yet

'Twas he who claimed the rabble's hate. His deed
Must needs be grand and fine ; and even now
He envied the white youth whose woman face
Had helped him to a master crime and won
For him this sea of fury !

And then came blackness
Dulling the pain, albeit he ever felt
The sun's flame-scourges and the maddening thirst.
As in a dream he heard the swelling shouts
Soften into a far shore's murmuring—
His own sweet shore of Joppa ! Again he saw
Hasting to meet him his too anxious love,
The glad tears welling in her big, sad eyes ;
Oft had she warned him of the Roman dogs,
And now that he was back, safe back again,
He swore that never more would he set forth
On his dark journeyings. 'Twas better so.
He took the brimming cup from her white hand,
He kissed her gently, then fell back to rest,
The waves' soft whispers wrapping him in sleep !

THE NEW CRUSADER.

(I.M.P.)

YET another is bound for the wars,
A soldier is harnessed for fight,
But the sword she bears is her flaming love,
And the shield her innocence white.

O, the harvest of Hatred and Death,
Where the stout heart with terror is cleft ;
She's away to the field, with a woman's hand,
To glean what the reapers have left.

What voice from over the sea
Gave her her mission high ?
Let the blood-red cross above her heart
Utter its meek reply.

'Tis for Him she will bind the wounds
Won in the murderous strife,
And press her dear hands to the burning brows
And mother men back to life.

She heeds not the shouting throng
Praising with loud accord ;
She has heard the whisper that comes to all
Who dare in the name of the Lord.

THE FOOTBRIDGE.

As on the rail I lean again
Far from the city's dismal din,
I mind me of dead autumn days,
And Nesta Wyn.

And how I bade her watch the lake,
Its darting joys and mad alarms :—
My heaven it was to gaze upon
Her mirrored charms !

To-day 'tis vain to scan the mere
Though heaven in its fair bosom lies
The heavens do hold no heaven for me
Without those eyes.

THE LOSS OF "THE TITANIC."

"A THOUSAND lost at sea!" On bleeding wing
From shore to listening shore, the shuddering news
Flew like a frightened bird; and with a world
In tears, I wept. "A thousand lost at sea!"
But the grey vastness of the terror vast
I knew not, till at break of day I heard
The name of one I loved; happy the hearts
That have but lost the thousand.
With the throng
Light-hearted as a lark had he set sail
Dreaming of dawning fortunes in the West.

Calm as the face of Tegid is the sea;
If ever storm hath tabernacled here,
To-night far hath it travellèd, nor left
One trace of its encampment in the fields.
Stillness: one only sound is heard, the deep
Kissing the ship (and none remembering
The cold kiss of Gethsemane).

The sea
A sea of glass, and night stoops down to catch
In it the pictured sadness of her face,
And every gem that lights her tresses: All
Is mirrored save the sable-winged doom
Fluttering unheard above the ship.

She fares
Onward and onward o'er the endless meads
Trailing like Olwen a white path of flowers.

Is it a phantom ship that loometh nigh
With "a smooth hurrying gait" so like the sails
That held in long amaze the Blessed Bran?
A ship of ice! Why hath it left its peers,
The great white fleet guarding the treasured north
A century of centuries? Is there
An icy hand upon yon icy helm,
With heart of ice helming the hand? O, God,
We cry "for those in peril on the sea!"

Reeling, the good ship cries for aid, her calls
Tearing a pathway through the quivering air;
Circling like sea-gulls in their agony.
Will the horizons hear? Yea, those great cries
Have meshed with mystic cords a hundred ships
And they, the fearless children of the wave,
Rush headlong to a sister's aid!
Too late!

The heaving tide lifts high and still more high
Its head, white hope and terror hand in hand
Walking the deck. "The Boats!" Firm stand the men

In one long gapless line (was finer line
Of Poetry ere writ ?) until the boats
Splash on the wave each with its priceless load :
Woman and child. Come, who will tell for me
And for the world that great romance—the long
Waiting for death through all the silent night ?
But better than all song is yonder tale
Of rescued, with proud gaps all musical
Shouting of English heroes who were lost
And found forever on that distant main.

Yet must I weep, though ocean's page hath won
New epics spelt in floating wrack, yet must I weep
With every weeper on the weeping shore.
I watch the shadows shake in ocean's depth,
And see the fright in his blue fearless eyes ;
Tangled forever with the waves' lament,
I hear a strong man's last despairing prayer.
Each cold cry circling on its wings of snow
Above me is a naked blade ; The acres
Of ocean green are now God's acres all ;
And every wave a ghostly wandering mound.

EAST AND WEST.

The world is turning to the East,
Waiting for someone o'er the hill ;
The grey lark on daring wing
Mounts to the highest cloud to see

If he draw nigh ;
He comes ! He comes !
A solemn gladness takes the air ;
Hosannas quiver in the air ;
And an invisible multitude
Cuts down the branches of the trees
And spreads them softly, lovingly,
Under the sandals of the Day.

The world is turning to the West ;
The blackbird's vesper keeps the sun
On the horizon lingering long ;
And after sunset still the glow lives on,
And I remember,
As in a dream,
A fire of peat in Ceredigion far ;
Is not the West a sad world's ingle-nook,
Its glow
Calling the tired children
To sit around ?
And one by one, from many a field they come.
And here the Father sits,
Listening to all the storied joys and sorrows of the day :
And in the shadows too I saw
A face all love,
(And tears were there I think in her mild eyes)—
Our Mother's face.

ON THE TROOPSHIP.

(G.C.)

An endless restless plain of gleaming sea ;
A sheet of burnished copper in the West ;
A soul at one with ocean's wild unrest
Yearning for thee.

In vain for sight of land we scan the foam ;
But when I find my swinging bed each night,
I see, thank God, with ravished eyes shut tight
The hills of home.

And with the dawn again, the boundless sea ;
A host of violets peeping in the East ;
A longing soul anhungered at the feast,
Dreaming of thee !

TO A QUAKERESS.

(L.S.)

I read a story of long centuries
Of quiet leaning on the love of God,
(Thrice blessed by the world's despiteful use);
Of holding all men equal,—none too low
To be a friend and none so high to claim
The doffing of a hat ; Of sweet compassion
And love for all the fallen ; of waiting dumb
On God until at last His spirit came,
As comes a sudden wind from breathless skies
With quaking raptures to the silent aspen.
I read the story, not in yellow tome
Or fading leaf, but in a shining page—
The holy scriptures of a woman's face,
My lamp the wistful burning of her eye.

SOMETHING TO EAT.

THE yellow-green fern uncurls in the sun,
The heather creeps into the grass of the field,
As I haste to my longed-for retreat ;
I know, Mr. Giles, how you fret and frown,
I know that the fern and the heather don't yield
Food for your sheep and your oxen, but stow it !
Shouldn't a poet,
Starved for a year in a famishing town,
Have something to eat ?

ON HEARING THE BLACKBIRD IN EARLY SPRING.

DON'T mention it! Look here,
I only threw the crumbs that I could spare;
Nothing to speak
Of; Well, yes, perhaps I *did* cut a slice
Or two in that white week
Of ice
And snow;
The bitter cold
That made you all so bold;
But then you needn't throw
All that gold
About! indeed, it's quite all right!
Good night!

THE STARS.

When the hush of evening falls,
And enthralls
The wearied minstrelsy of day,
When the thrush has told
All his gold,
Faintly, faintly falls the song
Chanted by heaven's shining throng.

The sky with melody is dight,
Woven of light,
Each beam a gold thread in the hymn ;
Every sweet-voiced hue,
Yellow and blue,
Red and amber blending free
To make complete the harmony.

Often has that skyey psalm
Poured its balm
On wounds left by the darts of day :
  Every hymn above
  Throbs with love
As if Thou, God, for love Thou art,
Hadst drawn the purple veils apart
And pressed the music to Thine heart !

A FIELD OF CORN.

"A SPLENDID field," said the farmer man,
"A finer I never saw,
The ears are simply bursting with corn,
And the stalk will make glorious straw."

"O, the golden waves!" quoth the pale-faced youth,
As he turned from his Keats aside,
"Scarce can the well-knit hedge-rows stem
The flow of the shining tide!"

While a nun stood silently at the stile
With a view devoutly grave—
Was she beholding with humble eyes
The BELOVED treading the wave?

THE LIMBERLOST.

(*"The green shadows."*—GENE STRATTON-PORTER.)

COME away to the Limberlost,
All its silence is calling for you,
We shall strike again the one-man trail,
And make it just do for two;
The Limberlost, the Limberlost,
All its silence is calling for you.

Come away to the Limberlost,
Where the gold know no alloy,
Where no one weeps save the willow tree,
And the willows all weep for joy;
The Limberlost, the Limberlost,
Where the willows all weep for joy.

Come away to the Limberlost
To reign a fair Forest Queen,
Where every sorrow is touched with love,
And the very shadows are green;
The Limberlost, the Limberlost,
Where the very shadows are green.

THE ABBEY RUINS.

WAS ever Day, with all its gold, as fair
As its own crumbling ruin in the West ?
The Abbey *Ruins* ? Nay, the wind's unrest,
The rainy silver hammers of the air
Have but made perfect with all patient care
The miracle ; and then on holy quest,
Came climbing summers and with verdure dressed
The finished walls and slender windows rare.
Hid are the bards who sang their songs in stone,
Whose rhyming arches flowered on stems so tall,
Made harmony with sighings musical,
With solemn vesper and glad orison ;
But though they hold their peace beneath the sod,
The stones do still cry out the praise of God.

REFUGEES.

D RIVEN before a thunderous ruthless hate
O nward you hasted from the fiery darts,
R eceived wild welcomes in fair freedom's name
A nd then made captive all our trusting hearts.

A face lit up with childhood's sunny dreams,
L aughter and gladness make their playground there
I n her round eyes a wistfulness most rare,
C aught in her hair ten thousand golden beams,
E 'en Prussian hordes, unscrupulously bold,
Have failed to loot fair Belgium's fairest gold !

L ike to a river gleaming in the sun
O n whose gay face the laughing ripplet leaps ;
U nder the mirth who knows what anguishing
I ts utmost heart in bravest silence keeps ?
S weet laughing child, I join thy rippling glee,
E ver remembering Sorrow's tragic deeps.

PIANO AND VIOLIN.

(DOROTHY IRENE *and* TREVOR ANWYL.)

HER fingers dreamt among the keys,
And soon the magic forest grew
  At the calling of her hand ;
Tall trees,
All trees,
That the dryads ever knew ;
Gleams of sunshine fair
Like wisps of golden hair ;
Shadows soft and cool,
And an eerie pool
  Glassing all the tangled spangled fairy-land.
    And from a yearning bow
    A clinging music sought each tree
    Pining, twining round the branched melody.

Her fingers maddened o'er the keys ;
Quivered the tree-tops tall ;
Shivered the branches all ;
Driven rain pattering,
Every leaf chattering,
And black shadows afrown in the ruffled pool,
And a long low cry of pain
Through wind and rain,
Of longing and love and loneliness.

Her fingers groping for the keys
(Oh, the blinding tears
Of these marrèd years !)
But never a tree will grow
Never a flower will blow :
Only a passionate rain of tears :
Her bosom yearns for the yearning bow
That could set all the leaves of her forest adance,
For the years of gold
And the hand that is cold
In the tortured soil of France.

THE BROOK.

A GOLDEN-HEADED summer morning
Dreamt along the vale ;
And through the rushes summer-carols
Went lisping in the dale.

Their delight my sad heart prisoned ;
There I tarried long ;
I could not cross the shaking footbridge,
So high the flood of song !

But as I listened, listened, listened,
To that rippling glee,
I thought I heard a sad note trembling
Through the melody.

Soon the carols fled and hid them
'Neath the rushes fair ;
And instead there came a wailing,
Longing and despair.

I had envied that brook's gladness,
Through the heavy years,
When its song, like mine, was nothing
But a rain of tears.

A PAINTING

(*By* L.G.)

A HORSE-SHOE mere,
  Just thrown for luck on the mountain-side ;
The fir-trees straggling up the steep,
  Into the heather's purple pride
And here and there
  Tumbling back in a heap,—
  While the purple in one flaming leap
Yearns to the blue :
It was all a climb
Sublime :
Till I took a peep
Into the mere, and I saw, all afrown
The fir-trees and heather
Together
Slipping down and down ;
And the blue, the pale complacent blue,
(I was rather glad !)
Was bottom of all, and so sad.
And I wondered there
Whether the crazy horse-shoe mere
Had brought much luck to the place after all.

THE WARS OF THE ROSES.

THE roses twain, the white and red,
Still strive for that fair field,
Sometimes the white will turn and fly
And all its banners yield.

And sometimes will it venture back
Routing the red (Ah me, the day!
I asked her once, but I was mad,
If I could dare to pray.)

And whether wins the red or white,
New wounds for me they yield;
But, Nesta, every wound shall sing
The glories of that field.

PORTHCAWL, 1916.

THE little catechiser and his dad
Along the shore : " Why won't the sea be still ?"
And then as best I could I tried to tell
The story of the moon's love for the deep.
" And, what is that big house built on the wall,
So tall and white with the windows all upstairs ?"
" That is the lighthouse : when the dark comes round
And you are tucked in bed, a man goes there
And puts a lighted candle in each window ;
The sailors then can see it and make out
Just where they are." " What is that big blue boat
Behind those doors ?" " A life-boat, when a storm
Comes on and some good ship is drowning, men
Jump into that and row right out to sea
To save the sailors' lives." And then we turned
Back to the town and on the square we saw
Some soldiers drilling and obeying prompt
The husky shoutings of a sergeant ; we looked on.
" *Fix Bayonets* !" and at once the sunshine flashed
Upon a hundred knives ; I felt the child
Press nearer to me and I stooped right down
To him to catch his frightened whisper :—" *Dad,*
What are they good for ?" . . . " Come away, my boy,
And let's go to the beach again, to watch
The sea-gulls and the big blue boat and light-house."

And back we went, the child still wondering why
I could not answer his so simple question :
Ah, little knew the lad that when I stooped
To him his grey eyes were the eyes of One
Who once asked questions strange in Salem's temple,
Eyes wistful with long waiting for a world's
Reply ; he guessed not that my heart, surprised,
Had heard God's sorrow raining bitter tears
Through the soft treble of his whispering.

HE TURNED BACK TO THE CITY.

He turned back to the city
  Where lords and ladies dwell,
And swore he would be always true
  To little Nell.

He swore he would remember,
  And kissed away her fears ;
And down his cheeks the hot tears coursed—
  Her bitter tears.